

MAY 1, 2009

DIRECTOR'S NEWS UPDATE



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Employee Program Changes

As reported in the Director's Update published on February 19, 2009 the national recession is deepening the negative effects on Oklahoma's economy. As a result, the Department of Corrections and all state agencies are preparing for budget reductions in fiscal year 2010 which starts July 1, 2009. In an effort to reduce the impact on payroll and operations for FY 2010, pro-active measures must be taken now. Also, to preserve our current full time employee funded level, several discretionary pay programs will be discontinued effective May 1, 2009. The programs which will be impacted are OK Health, Tuition Assistance, Sign-On Bonus for Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses, and the Continuous Service Incentive (CSI) Plan for Correctional Security Officers.

In the past, the agency was able to provide up to \$500 as an incentive for employees to participate in the OK Health plan. Although employees may still enroll in the plan, and take advantage of the programs offered, the agency will not provide the financial incentive to employees who enroll after April 30, 2009. Employees who are participating in OK Health prior to May 1,

2009, will continue to receive payments for qualifying participation.

Over the last four years, the Tuition Assistance Program has benefited over 250 college attending employees. Payments for this program will be honored for the 2009 Spring semester; however, no additional funding for the program will be available after May 1, 2009.

Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses hired through April 30, 2009, will receive a sign-on bonus; however, this program will not be utilized after that date.

The CSI Plan for Correctional Security Officers will be discontinued for all new hires effective May 1, 2009. Officers hired prior to May 1, 2009, will continue to receive CSI payments as scheduled.

As always, I will keep you updated as further developments arise during this legislative session. There will be other challenges ahead, but I believe that we will face them and continue to provide our high standard of professional public service.